



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

TWO ASSUMED EPIC LEGENDS IN SPANISH.

Señor Menéndez y Pelayo, in his recent valuable work on Spanish ballads,¹ in addition to a detailed account of the preserved ballad-cycles, also discusses at length the legendary material found in the early chronicles. Two of his alleged instances of such epic matter present resemblances with extraneous legends which seem to have escaped the learned Spanish scholar. They seem thus to call for a more detailed discussion than he has given them. These comparisons will also tend to modify some of his conclusions in regard to the originality of the Spanish chroniclers in their treatment of legendary matters.

The first case² is self-evident and shows that the chronicler, far from making use of native legendary matter, has simply plagiarized the Bible. We read namely in the Chronicle of Alfonso VII *el Emperador* of a certain Munio Alfonso, a renowned warrior whom the King made Alcaide of the region beyond the Guadarrama. This hero fell at last in a fight against the Moors. When the news of his death reached Toledo, the chronicle³ continues thus :

“Et per multos dies mulier Munionis Adefonsi cum amicis suis et cæteræ viduæ veniebant super sepulchrum Munionis Adefonsi, et plangebant planctum, et hujuscemodi dicebant : ‘O Munio Adefonsi ! nos dolemus super te : sicut mulier quæ unicum amat maritum, ita toletana civitas te diligebat. Clypeus tuus numquam declinavit in bello, et hasta tua numquam rediit retrorsum, et ensis tuus non est reversus inanis. Nolite annuntiare mortem Munionis Adefonsi in Corduba et in Sebilis, neque in domo regis Texufini, ne forte lætentur filiæ Moabitarum et contristentur filiæ toletanorum.’”

Concerning this Señor Menéndez y Pelayo says⁴ :

“Prescindiendo de otros pormenores más discutibles, no puede negarse que el llanto de las viudas toledanas sobre la sepultura de Munio Alfonso es un trozo patético y de alta poesía, que trae inmediatamente á la memoria el

llanto de Andrómaca al final del libro xxxii de la *Ilíada*. Pero no me atrevo á conjeturar si este trozo formó parte de una canción de gesta en que se narrasen las prósperas y adversas fortunas del alcaide de Toledo, ó si es un fragmento puramente lírico, unas *endechas* funerales, como las que en el siglo xv se cantaron en el Carmen de Lisboa sobre la tumba del Condestable Nuño Alvarez Pereira, en la isla de Lanzarote sobre la muerte de Guillén Peraza, en Córdoba sobre la tragedia de los Comendadores, en Vizcaya con ocasión de varios duelos domésticos y venganzas de banderizos, según el testimonio de Garibay. Aun en este caso tendremos en la *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, compuesta poco después de 1146, el más antiguo vestigio de un género de poesía lírica popular, muy enlazado con los romances.”

Unfortunately it can be shown that in this “llanto” we have neither a fragment of a *chanson de geste* nor an ancient *endecha*. It is, of course, quite possible that the deeds of the brave Munio may have been told in epic song, or even that the women of Toledo sang a lament over his tomb. But the song given by the chronicle cannot be accepted as proof of either, for the writer has simply adapted to his hero a well-known lyric dirge, possibly the oldest recorded,—the lament of David over Jonathan. In the Vulgate this reads as follows⁵ :

“Planxit autem David planctum hujuscemodi super Saul, et super Jonathan filium ejus : . . . Nolite annuntiare in Geth, neque annuntietis in compitis Ascalonis, ne forte lætentur filiæ Philisthiim, ne exultent filiæ incircumcisorum. . . . A sanguine interfectorum, ab adipe fortium, sagitta Jonathæ numquam rediit retrorsum, et gladius Saul non est reversus inanis. . . . Doleo super te, frater mi Jonatha, decore nimis et amabilis super amorem mulierum. Sicut mater unicum amat filium suum, ita ego te diligebam.”

A comparison of this with the extract from the *Chronicon Adefonsi Imperatoris* given above will suffice to show that the latter cannot be considered as proving anything in regard to purely Spanish poetry, whether epic or lyric.

The second case⁶ is less striking than this, though equally worthy of consideration. It is the tragic story of the death of the mother of Sancho García, count of Castile. This is narrated by the *Crónica general* of Alfonso el Sabio as follows⁷ :

¹ *Tratado de los romances viejos*, Madrid, 1903-1906.

² *Op. cit.*, II, pp. 26-32.

³ *Chronica Adefonsi imperatoris*, in *España sagrada*, xxi, 390.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, II, p. 31.

⁵ II Reg. I, 17-27.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, I, pp. 248-251.

⁷ Edition of Menéndez Pidal, Madrid, 1906, p. 454.

"La madre deste conde don Sancho, cobdiciando casar con un rey de los moros, asmo de matar su fijo por tal que se alcasase con los castiellos et con las fortalezas de la tierra, et que desta guisa casarie con el rey moro mas endereçadamientre et sin embargo. Et ella destemprando una noche las yeruas quel dicesse a beuer con que muriesse, fue en ello una su couigera de la condessa, et entendio muy bien que era. Et quando veno el conde, aquella couigera descubrio aquel fecho que sabia de su sennora a un escudero que queria bien, que andaua en casa del conde; et el escudero dixolo al conde su sennor, et conseiol commo se guardase de aquella traycion. . . . Et quando la madre quiso dar al conde aquel uino a beuer, rogo el a su madre que beuiesse ella primero; et ella dixo que lo non farie, ca non lo avie mester. Et el rogola muchas uezes que beuiesse, et ella non lo quiso ninguna uez; et el quando uio que la non podie uencer por ruego, fizogelo beuer por fuerça; et aun dizen que saco el la espada et dixol que si lo non beuiesse quel cortarie la cabeça. Et ella con aquel miedo beuio el uino et cayo luego muerta."

The likeness of this tale to that told of Rosamund, wife of the first Lombard king Alboin, has apparently escaped the notice of Señor Menéndez y Pelayo. The latter is, in brief, as follows: Rosamund slays Alboin with the help of his armor bearer Helmichis. Repulsed by the Lombards, the pair flee to Ravenna, where they are well received by the prefect Longinus. The latter falls in love with Rosamund and begs her to get rid of Helmichis. She consents and devises another crime. A poisoned draught is concocted for Helmichis as he comes forth from his bath. Then, says, the chronicler Agnellus of Ravenna⁸:

"Postquam egressus de balneo, in ipso fervore corporis quo calor obsederat, attulit Rosmunda calicem potionis plenum, quasi ad regis opus; erat veneno mixto. At ubi intelligens potum esse mortis, submovit ore suo poculum, et dedit regi-næ, dicens: 'Bibe et tu mecum.' Illa vero noluit, evaginatoque gladio stetit super eam et dixit: 'Si non biberis de hoc, te percutiam.' Volens nolens bibit, et ea hora mortui sunt."

This story, as Nigra first showed,⁹ is the foundation of the widely spread ballad *Donna Lombarda*,

⁸ *Liber Pontificalis*, II, 4, in Muratori, II, p. 124.

⁹ The latest discussion is that by Doncieux, *Romanicéro populaire de la France*, pp. 174-184; cf. also D'Ancona, *La Poesia popolare italiana*, 2^{da} ed., pp. 136-139.

which reappears in Spanish as *El Convite*.¹⁰ The resemblance in fundamental theme between the story of Rosamund and that of the mother of Sancho García, seems undeniable; it is especially striking in the case of the threat, reported in almost the same words. Some details, such as the warning,¹¹ are different, but are not numerous enough to exclude a direct relation between the two versions. This relation may be explained in two ways. Either the earliest Spanish chronicler, in this case the archbishop Rodrigo Ximénez of Toledo¹² from whom the *General* takes it, has borrowed the incident directly from Agnellus or Paulus Diaconus, or the elements of a widely spread oral tradition have been exploited by the chroniclers of both nations. The problem hardly admits of a solution, but I confess that the first supposition seems to me more probable. The archbishop Rodrigo was a man of wide reading, and the "Lombard Histories" of Paul the Deacon were well known throughout the Middle Ages. In either case, it is more or less doubtful whether this story, as we have it in the Chronicle, can be regarded as truly Spanish in origin, or as preserving a fragment of a native epic tradition.

WILLIAM PIERCE SHEPARD.

Hamilton College.

ETYMOLOGICAL NOTES.

1. Goth. *-deisei* in *filu-deisei* 'Schlauheit, Arglist' are compared with Skt. *dīdhī* 'schaue hin, nehme wahr, denke,' *dhiyasānā-s* 'aufmerkend,' etc. (cf. Uhlenbeck *Et. Wb.*², 45). To these belongs Norw. dial. *dīsa* 'stirre (undrende; lurende),' 'stare.'

2. MHG. *meidem* 'männl. Pferd' has been fancifully connected with Goth. *maipms* 'Geschenk' (cf. Grimm, *Gr.* III, 325; Uhlenbeck, *Et. Wb.*², 105). But as the word is used of a castrated animal, gelding: MLG. *meidem* 'verschnittenes männl. Pferd,' MHG. *meidenen* 'cas-

¹⁰ Cf. Menéndez y Pelayo, II, pp. 509-511.

¹¹ Occurs in some of the ballad versions.

¹² *Res in Hispania gestae*, before 1247.